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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 004883

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [IS](#) [GAZA](#) [DISENGAGEMENT](#) [GOI](#) [EXTERNAL](#)

SUBJECT: CODEL KING'S MEETING WITH GOI SECURITY MINISTER
GIDEON EZRA

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Gene A. Cretz for reasons 1.4 (b)
) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: Codel King met with Minister of Public Security Gideon Ezra where discussions focused on disengagement, anti-disengagement protests, and related security concerns. Ezra stressed the importance of intelligence gathering and sharing as a necessary tool in combating terrorism, both in the U.S. and Israel. Ezra underscored GOI concerns about the growing danger of Iran's extremist ideology and its historical support for Hizballah. End Summary.

Security Officials: Disengagement Top Priority

2. (C) U.S. Representatives Peter King, Charlie Dent, Michael McCaul, and Donna Christensen, accompanied by staff members Steve Devine, Tom Dilenge, Josh Weerasinghe, Margaret Peterlin, Sue Ramanathan, Tom Finan, and Air Force House Liaison Officer Colonel Darrell Adams met with Minister of Public Security Gideon Ezra on August 3. Ezra was accompanied by Rani Falk, Director General, Ministry of Public Security; Major General Yohanan Danino, Head of Operational Staff Unit; Natan Rotenberg, Director, International Relation Department; and Colonel Yehoshua Bauer, ministry spokesman. Econoff (notetaker) accompanied Codel King. Falk said security remains a major concern for the GOI as pullout opponents seek to disrupt settlement evacuations from the Gaza Strip.

3. (C) Disengagement opponents have shown support for the Gaza settlers by demonstrating in various towns and cities in Israel, Falk noted. He said recent demonstrations in places like Sderot and Ofakim have numbered in the several thousands. Falk said protesters want to enter Gaza to interrupt security operations and bolster support for settlers who may resist evacuation. He said there are approximately nine thousand settlers living in Gaza in 21 settlements. When disengagement begins, Falk said he believes that 50 percent of these settlers will depart without causing any problems.

4. (C) Falk said that 25,000 security personnel will implement the evacuation plan. According to Falk, evacuation opponents might smuggle weapons into Gaza in order to support the settlers. Falk indicated, however, that he remains confident that Israeli forces are able to tackle this hurdle. Bauer said the issue of security personnel refusing orders is not a major concern because there have only been four cases where police officers have refused to carry out their disengagement-related duties.

5. (C) Falk said that the GOI has built three-to-four hundred homes for Gaza settlers in Ashdod, Ashkelon and Tel Aviv for approximately 1,700 families. As of August 2, only 23 or 24 families have moved into these homes. He said Gaza settlers are "angry and unhappy" because of uncertainties after their relocation. The GOI has offered Gaza settlers many benefits to ease the transition, he noted. He said Jewish communities across Israel have and continue to offer assistance to the settlers.

6. (C) The GOI and the Palestinian Authority (PA) are cooperating on the disengagement plan. Falk said officials from both sides meet daily to address security-related issues. He said cooperation between the GOI and Egypt on the disengagement plan is positive, citing agreement for the eventual placement of 750 Egyptian border guards on the Philadelphi Corridor between Gaza and Egypt.

Ezra: Intelligence Sharing Is Important

7. (C) Ezra said the relationship between the GOI and the U.S. is very important for both nations. He said he hopes that this relationship will continue to grow and become stronger over time. Ezra said good intelligence is needed to thwart possible threats and that Israel has been able to respond effectively because of good intelligence. He said if police officials were not able to gather information about a pending terrorist attack, there would be more casualties in Israel. Ezra said the U.S. must also gather intelligence by

monitoring Muslim communities and try to recruit informants, if it wants to ensure its security.

18. (C) Israel has problems because its borders, especially with Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon are not secure. Ezra said smuggling of weapons into Israel remains a concern. He said security capabilities are becoming more enhanced in Israel because private companies and other security experts are sharing ideas which help the GOI to take effective security measures. He said the U.S. and GOI must also share ideas regarding new technologies that can benefit both countries.

19. (C) Surveillance of mass transit is difficult, but doable, Ezra noted. He said that the USG should focus more on placing surveillance equipment on trains and subways, instead of on buses. He said GOI security forces have had little success preventing terrorists from bombing buses because of the difficulty in monitoring or responding in time.

Ezra: Hizballah, Hamas, and Iran, Threaten the World

10. (C) Ezra underlined that Hizballah is a major threat to the world and Hamas is a threat to Israel. He said Hizballah is supported by Iran, which is "enemy number one now." Iran has proved to the world that an extremist Muslim state can exist, he noted. It would be good if the Iranian system did not succeed, said Ezra.

11. (U) Codel King did not clear this cable.

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